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DE RUEHSV #0264 1730441  
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FM AMEMBASSY SUVA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1334  
INFO RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA  
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHMFIUU/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI//JO7/CATMED/CAT//  
RUEHAP/AMEMBASSY APIA 0292  
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RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2278  
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 0124  
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RUEHKR/AMEMBASSY KOROR 0245  
RUEH MJ/AMEMBASSY MAJURO 0789  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0201  
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RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0340  
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RUEHBN/AMCONSUL MELBOURNE 0301  
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY 1109  
RUEHPT/AMCONSUL PERTH 0020

UNCLAS SUVA 000264

SIPDIS

BANGKOK FOR REO AND AID/RDMA

JAKARTA FOR RMO

E.O 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [CASC](#) [AMED](#) [KFLU](#) [FJ](#)

SUBJECT: FIJI CONFIRMS ITS FIRST TWO CASES OF H1N1

1. Fiji recorded its first two confirmed cases of Influenza A/H1N1 over the weekend. According to press reports, a 36-year-old male resident of Fiji, who returned home from Melbourne on June 10, sought treatment from a private physician after he became ill and after family in Australia advised him that they had tested positive for the virus. Press reports quote Health Permanent Secretary Dr. Sala Saketa, as saying: "A sample was taken [on the night of June 19] and immediately sent to the national testing laboratory, and the result was confirmed in the early hours of [June 20]." According to Dr. Saketa, the man is being treated with Tamiflu while being quarantined in his Nadi home. His family is also under home quarantine.

2. Newspapers on June 21 reported that a 32-year-old man, who is a close friend of Fiji's first patient, is now also being treated and quarantined in his Nadi home for seven days after testing positive for H1N1. Divisional Medical Officer West Dr. Tharid Ali told the press that health officials have been tracing those who came into close contact with the two confirmed cases. He said there have been 67 samples tested at the national influenza laboratory at Mataika House since the global outbreak of the virus. Only these two have been confirmed.

3. Fiji has been bracing for this eventuality for weeks, with the press reporting on even suspected cases. Suva-based Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Communicable Disease and Surveillance Specialist Dr. Narendra Singh told us on June 9 that the reality of H1N1 had energized Fijian authorities and other Pacific island governments. Influenza pandemic planning efforts, which had been languishing in the wake of an H5N1 threat that never materialized, suddenly seem relevant and important, he said, and officials are now focused on adapting and filling gaps in existing plans.

4. Current screening procedures at Fijian ports of entry rely on self identification, reports from flight crews, and direct observation of arriving passengers by health officials. Fiji does not employ thermal scanners. In addition to screening arriving passengers, health officials have conducted an awareness campaign for local health care providers to strengthen domestic surveillance efforts. Aggie Dawainavefia, WHO coordinator for the Influenza

Program based at Mataika House, the Fijian Ministry of Health Virology Laboratory, told us that Fiji performs real time RTPCR for Influenza A (H1N1). (The lab had run out of the reagents necessary for the PCR testing but received an additional supply from U.S. CDC in late May.) According to Dawainavefia, although Fiji's lab is able to determine if a specimen is positive for H1N1, samples are sent to Melbourne for reconfirmation.

McGann